



# Pillar & Post

## Humble Leadership—Laura DeBella



Born and raised in Trinidad, Laura DeBella was the sixth of seven children born to John and Grace DeBella. Even while attending Trinidad Catholic High School, she knew she wanted to attend TSJC.

“I knew it would be a great option for me,” Laura said. “Trinidad Catholic provided an excellent foundation, and the professors at TSJC prepared me to take the next step. I especially appreciated Charlotte Kilpatrick in the Music department, and Father Victor Dossogne in Philosophy and Sociology.”

After leaving TSJC to complete her four-year degree at University of Northern Colorado, Laura entered the insurance industry—where she built an increasingly successful career, primarily with State Farm. After several years away, an opportunity arose in 1994 to return to Trinidad.

“Trinidad holds a special place in my heart,” she said, “and when the opportunity to return to my hometown came up, I embraced it for many reasons. Professionally, it allowed me to serve both long-time residents and new community members.”

Laura’s agency flourished in Trinidad. She would also place great emphasis on civic engagement, immersing herself in a wide range of community volunteer activities.

“Each of us has an opportunity,” Laura explained, “we can choose whether or not we want to impact our community. I chose to get involved to help the local business environment, and do what I could to improve opportunities for our most important assets—our children and their dreams.”

In many ways, Laura has always exemplified a quiet perseverance—working tirelessly to help create a greater good. Thankfully, this also included the TSJC Educational Foundation, where she served on the Board of Directors for a total of 13 years. Never one to seek the spotlight, Laura was viewed by her peers as a trusted, dedicated leader.

In 1993, the DeBella family established the R. Greg DeBella Scholarship in memory of Laura’s brother. In addition to being a local artist and sculptor, Greg was a wildlife biologist. Laura continues to support this scholarship through annual contributions. She also became a member of the Society of 1925, which

honors those who include a legacy gift for Trinidad State in their estate plans.

“I wanted to do something to help students,” she explained. “I also knew that I didn’t have a great amount of money, but I realized I could purchase a life insurance policy and make the TSJC Educational Foundation the owner and beneficiary. It was one way I could create a legacy gift.”

After a long and successful career, Laura decided to retire in 2020. “I love my profession but realized—even though I’d originally planned to celebrate 30 years in business in Trinidad—2020 was right time to retire. It was time to focus on the next chapter of my life.”

“My husband and I have three sons and six grandchildren,” Laura added. “I’ll stay involved in the community, but will also be pursuing my favorite hobbies, fitting in more travel, and spending time with our grandchildren—all fun, fun, fun!”

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Trinidad State remains grateful to Laura DeBella for all she’s done for the College—sharing both her leadership and her generous philanthropic support.

If you would like more information about creating a legacy gift for Trinidad State, please contact Toni DeAngelis at [toni.deangelis@trinidadstate.edu](mailto:toni.deangelis@trinidadstate.edu) or 719-846-5520. All inquiries will be held in confidence.